

## REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Claims 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 21 have been amended. Applicants believe that the obviousness rejection has been overcome in view of the amendments and for the reasons set forth below.

With respect to the obviousness rejection, the pending claims are rejected in view of German Patent Document No. DE3435883 ("*DE '883*"). The Patent Office essentially asserts that this reference discloses each and every feature of the claimed invention.

As previously discussed, Claims 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, and 21 have been amended. Of the pending claims at issue, claims 1, 12 and 21 are the sole independent claims. Claim 1 relates to a dialyzer inlet header that includes a body designed to be attached to an end of a dialyzer; an inlet channel that provides fluid communication from an exterior of the dialyzer to an interior of the dialyzer wherein the inlet channel defines a fluid flow path that is axial to a fiber bundle located in the interior of the dialyzer. The dialyzer inlet header further includes at least one member for modifying the fluid flow path of fluid as it exits the inlet channel wherein the modifying member includes a curved vane that extends from a portion of the body.

Independent claim 12 relates to a dialyzer. The dialyzer includes a body; a fiber bundle located in an interior of the body; a blood inlet located at a first end of the body that includes a fluid flow channel that causes blood to flow in an axial direction with respect to the fiber bundle; and a member located in juxtaposition and integral to the blood inlet that causes blood to flow to a perimeter region of a first end of the fiber bundle.

Independent claim 21 relates to a dialyzer header. The dialyzer header includes a body member that has an inlet channel for providing fluid communication from an exterior to an interior of the header wherein the inlet channel defines a fluid path that is axial to a casing of a dialyzer to which the dialyzer head is attached. The body member of the dialyzer header includes a plurality of members that extend from the body member and that impart a circular motion to the fluid as it enters the interior of the header.

Applicants have discovered that the improved header design of the present invention can provide and improve flow of blood into the interior of the dialyzer and specifically to the fiber bundle. This eliminates, or at least substantially reduces, the zones of low flow thereby reducing

the potential for clotting while improving the ability to rinse the header of blood. See, Specification, page 2, lines 15-20.

In contrast, Applicants believe that the *DE* '883 reference fails to disclose or arguably suggest at least a number of the features of the claimed invention. For example, this reference merely discloses a plate (46) that purportedly acts to distribute flow within a dialyzer as illustrated, for example, in Figures 1-3. Indeed, this reference further discloses that generally radial arcuate guide ribs (50) extend from and are integral to an upper plate face of the plate (46). This clearly contrasts the structural features of the claimed invention that require, in part, a fluid flow path modifying member that extends from and/or is integral to a body that defines an inlet header of the dialyzer. This is clearly supported in the specification and as further illustrated in the figures of the above-referenced application. Therefore, Applicants believe that one skilled in the art would consider that the claimed invention and the dialyzer as disclosed in the *DE* '883 reference are distinguishable.

Based on at least these noted reasons, Applicants believe that the *DE* '883 reference fails to disclose or arguably suggest a number of features of the claimed invention. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the *DE* '883 reference fails to anticipate and arguably render obvious the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the anticipation rejection be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit reconsideration of same.

Respectfully submitted,

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